



JOSEPH R. BIDEN, III  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
820 NORTH FRENCH STREET  
WILMINGTON, DELAWARE 19801

CONTACT JASON MILLER  
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER  
PHONE (302) 577-8949  
CELL (302) 893-8939  
Jason.Miller@state.de.us

**Media Release**  
April 4, 2011

### **Attorney General Alerts Delawareans to Scam Targeting Grandparents**

**Wilmington** – Attorney General Beau Biden advised Delawareans today to be aware of scam artists preying on grandparents' generosity toward their grandchildren.

Seniors from around the country have recently reported receiving calls from criminals posing as a grandchild making pleas for money. The callers claim to be in an emergency situation, usually overseas, and ask to be wired money to get out of the predicament. The scam artists can glean family information from social networking sites, marketing lists or obituaries, according to the Consumer Federation of America. In some cases, scammers have contacted victims by emails asking for money.

"It's a shame that grandparents need to worry about criminals exploiting their love for their grandchildren for financial gain, but scam artists are always looking for new ways to steal," Attorney General Biden said.

Biden said Delawareans should make sure to verify the identity of the person claiming to be a grandchild and asking for money. Be especially cautious if the caller does not use a name, but instead starts off the conversation by saying "It's me," "This is your favorite grandchild" or "Grandma, is that you?" Scammers have used this method to trick their victims into giving them the name of a grandchild.

Last week, the Ohio Attorney General's Office estimated that this scam has already cost that state's residents \$100,000 this year, including \$15,000 taken from a single victim. The Michigan Attorney General's Office is also reporting outbreaks of the scam, with victims losing between \$1,000 and \$5,000 in recent weeks. In February, a New Jersey resident told authorities he had been scammed out of \$2,800 by someone posing as his grandson claiming to be in a Canadian jail.

Delawareans who believe they have received phone calls related to this scam or any other suspicious solicitations should call the Attorney General's Consumer Hotline at 800-220-5424. For more information about how to avoid being scammed, visit the Attorney General's website at [www.attorneygeneral.delaware.gov](http://www.attorneygeneral.delaware.gov) or the Consumer Federation of America's Web site at [www.consumerfed.org/fraud](http://www.consumerfed.org/fraud).

###